



Kershaw County First Steps Partnership *Fiscal Year 2009 Annual Report*

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Sammie Tucker, Jr.

Executive Director:

Kimberley Jordan

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**Total children in county under
age 6:** 4363 children

**Total Children in county
living in poverty:** 20.6%

Kershaw County Highlights

- KCFS Early Advantages' Program (Parent Child Home) had two families to graduate from the program.
- Kershaw County QEI centers used technical assistance to enhance quality of care in classrooms.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Thank you for your continuing support of Kershaw County First Steps Partnership. We are dedicated to building on our reputation of high quality, responsive services to young children and their families and early childhood educators. Fiscal challenges make our KCFS Board of Directors and staff more determined than ever to do all that we can do to help families with young children and the child care community deal with stresses. Our mission is firm, get children in Kershaw County ready for school.

We continue to achieve results the community can measure. In fiscal year 2008-2009, Kershaw County First Steps continued to improve its results through targeted outcomes. Here are just a few examples:

- Through Kershaw County First Steps activities, children of all economic backgrounds have better access to quality early child care and education;
- 71% of the teachers working at a KCFS Quality Enhancement Initiative center attend certified trainings (focused on quality enhancement);
- Kershaw County First Steps activities reached 20 percent more children ages birth to 3 this fiscal year compared with 2007-2008.

As the state celebrates 10 years of working to enrich children's lives with supportive services, I am confident that we're building a better tomorrow for our community's youngest children. I look forward to working with you to continue to help our very young succeed by providing a solid foundation for their future.

Sincerely,

Kimberley Jordan
Executive Director
Kershaw County First Steps

First Steps to School Readiness Strategy Areas

The First Steps initiative approaches children's school readiness needs in five ways:

Family Strengthening: A parent is a child's first and best teacher. First Steps works to help parents become the best parents they can be. First Steps also helps parents further their own education.

Healthy Start: Children's development and ability to learn are profoundly impacted by their health in the earliest years. First Steps works to help families understand children's health needs through education and screenings while also working to help them access needed health services.

Quality Child Care: Quality child care provides immediate and long-term learning benefits for children. First Steps works to expand the availability of quality child-care to families and to enhance the level of quality in existing child-care environments.

Early Education: Research shows that children who participate in high-quality preschool classes are more likely to start school ready to learn, as well as be more successful later in life. First Steps works to expand high-quality 3-year-old and 4-year-old kindergarten opportunities in public and private settings.

School Transition: The transition into kindergarten is a critical time that sets the tone for children's perspectives about the school years, as well their parents' perspectives. Making a strong initial connection between school and home -- and supporting both parents and students during this transition time -- has been shown to impact students' later school success and parents' later involvement during the school years.

2008-09 County Partnership Programs by Strategy

FAMILY STRENGTHENING.

Early Advantages Program (Parent Child Home)

Program description: EARLY ADVANTAGES Parent-Child Home Program is a research-based early literacy and school readiness parenting education program that prepares young children for school success by increasing language and literacy skills, enhancing social-emotional development, and strengthening the parent-child relationship. This program provides intensive home visiting to families with children ages 1-4 years of age in the rural and low-income areas of Kershaw County who are challenged by poverty, low levels of education, language and literacy barriers, and barriers to healthy child development and educational success. The EARLY ADVANTAGES Parent-Child Home Program promotes school success by stimulating reading, conversation, and play between parents and their children. Each week, our Family Specialist brings a book or toy that will remain with the family permanently. Often these are the first children's books and educational toys in the home. Using the book or toy, the Family Specialist models verbal interaction -- reading, conversation, and play -- designed to develop language and literacy skills. The books and toys are carefully chosen by the Program Site Coordinator based upon specific criteria established by The Parent-Child Home Program's National Center. The materials chosen serve as tools to encourage parents to talk, read, and play with their children. At the conclusion of the Program year, each family has their own library of high quality children's books and educational toys. *Early Advantages helps a parent create a language-rich home environment and empowers each family to actively participate in their children's education.* Services are provided in the home or a community setting and include resource and referral information to families. Referrals include information about community agencies that improve access to healthcare, health insurance; early intervention referral services; health education classes; kindergarten transition; family literacy; and child passenger safety education. Transitional Scholarships are provided for eligible families to attend a child care center that is participating in Quality Enhancement Initiative with Kershaw County First Steps. The program also provides a parent training component with monthly group meetings that focus on assisting parents to understand child development and preventing child abuse and neglect. Curriculums used for group meetings are from the Triple P Program (Positive Parenting Program, USC) and Zero to Three (Prevent Child Abuse and Neglect).

Program results:

- 10 adults and 10 children served
- KIPS Assessment- parent child interaction showed an increase average of 0.83 on the scale.
- On the ACIRI Literacy Assessment, parents showed an average increase of 0.32 on the scale and the children showed an increase of 0.17 on the scale.
- Parents received 366 home visits with a 93% successful visit rate (only 7% missed visits).

- Parenting Intensity Summary reports an average of 6.31 visits per month, above the required average visits per month. All visits meet duration requirement of minimum 30 minutes.
- Parents attended 10 group meetings for the fiscal year.
- Four families received scholarship assistance to attend quality centers.
- For FY10 the partnership plans to increase the number of families served to 12 and to offer developmental screenings using the Ages & Stages Questionnaire to all families enrolled.

QUALITY CHILD CARE.

Kershaw County Child Care Quality Enhancement Initiative

Program description: KCFS will enroll Kershaw County child care centers, family providers, and self-arranged care providers in the KCFS Child care Quality Enhancement Initiative. The purpose of the program is to assist child care providers to move to a higher level of license or accreditation. Activities include:

- classroom assessment (ECERS, ITERS, and FDCERS),
- on-site technical assistance,
- certified training,
- materials to assist with implementing recommendations,
- The Color Me Healthy Program is a partnership with KC Clemson Extension to provide
- The BEE (Books Enrich Everyone) Program is a partnership with the Friends of the Kershaw County Library. The benefits include:
 - Quarterly books for children enrolled in the selected classrooms at the child care program.
 - Pre/post assessments to create a baseline measure of enhancement using the State literacy inventory.
 - Providing technical assistance to assist with literacy enhancement in the classroom.

Program results:

- 7 facilities
- Participating Childcare providers received up to 32 hours of technical assistance service.
- Average assessment scores range from 5.86 to 2.58
- For FY10, KCFS plans to assist participating facilities to focus on using their assessment results as a guide for their Quality Enhancement Plan.

Kershaw County Child Care Staff Training and Development

Program description: KCFS enrolled child care staff in the KCFS child care Readiness Training. The purpose of the program is to enhance the staff's knowledge of children's growth and development, curriculum, guidance and program administration. KCFS provided certified training in the DSS required areas.

Program results:

- 104 adults served
- 71% of the QEI facilities staff participated.
- Hosted 24 hours of certified trainings and 7 hours of registered trainings.
- 80% of participants show an increase of knowledge on the pre-post training survey.
- For FY10, KCFS QEI facilities are encouraged to enroll staff in the TEACH program; and each QEI teacher is assisted with developing a professional development plan and that may include trainings at other training sites in the state.

Kershaw County Child Care Resource and Referral Services

Program description: KCFS received matching funds from United Way of Midlands and SC Department of Social Services to implement CCR&R in Kershaw County. KC Child Care Resource and Referral* - will ensure that targeted populations (e.g., parents and families of children 0-5, child care providers (both current and potential), and local businesses and the community at-large) have the necessary tools for recognizing, choosing, creating, and maintaining high quality child care in Kershaw County. CCR&R staff provided the following services to targeted population as follows: (1) Parents – resource and referrals, informational/educational materials, and parent outreach; (2) Child care providers – ongoing technical assistant to encourage higher standards, professional development plans, provider recruitment and lending library.

Program results:

- 240 participants
- 95% of the surveys indicate an increase in families knowledge of quality childcare and early childhood best practice;
- 3 child care programs not enrolled in KC Quality Enhancement Initiative (QEI) receives technical assistance with direct service issues;
- For FY10, KCFS CCR&R will merge with KC QEI to provide technical assistance and training to participants that only want assistance with direct service issues.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

<u>Expenditures</u> By Funding Source	
State Appropriation (<i>Fund 10</i>)	\$145,772
E.I.A. Appropriation (<i>Fund 55</i>)	\$17,534
State Private (<i>Fund 15</i>)	\$2253
Local Private (<i>Fund 20</i>)	\$12,855
Federal (<i>Fund 30</i>)	\$60,485
In-Kind (<i>Fund 25</i>)	\$11,150
TOTAL:	\$250,049

<u>Expenditures</u> By Program / Strategy Name	
Parent -Child Home	\$65,001
Child Care Quality Enhancement	\$50,515
Child Care Training & Professional Dev	\$35,686
Resource and Referral Services	\$24,765
Indirect Programmatic Functions	\$55,240
Administrative Functions	\$18,842
TOTAL:	\$250,049

NOTABLE DONORS

<i>DONOR'S NAME</i>	AMOUNT
United Way	\$23,678
Friends of Kershaw Library	\$8936
Child Care Providers	\$1941
TOTAL:	\$34,555

Local Match Percentage for FY 2009: 53.1%
(At least 15% Legislative requirement)

KERSHAW COUNTY PARTNERSHIP

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Sammie Tucker, Jr. Board Chairman, Parent of a Preschooler

Marion Bennett, Faith Community
Katharine Bradley, Legislative Appointee
Audrey Burroughs, Early Childhood Education
Lula Callwood, Child Care/Early Childhood
John Clinton, Transportation
Tim Cooper, Business Community
Lauren Decker, Nonprofit Organization
Patricia Johnson-Moses, Statutory Member- KC Head Start
Lottie Jones, Transportation
Diane McDonald, Statutory Member- KC Health Department
Susan Munn, Healthcare Provider
Amy Scholfield, Statutory Member -KC Library
Connie Sheorn, Statutory Member- KC School District
Rudine Smalls-McClouds, Early Childhood Education
Tracy West, Family Education Training & Support Provider
Lisa Wilson, Child Care/Early Childhood
Jeanne W. Hanna, Statutory Member- KC Department of Social Services

COUNTY DATA SNAPSHOT

In FY09, First Steps County Partnerships statewide made it a priority to become increasingly data-driven. County Partnerships successfully began using powerful new components of the First Steps data system, and County Partnerships also utilized data in new ways to drive their FY09 program plans. In addition to enhanced program data tracking, County Partnerships are also focusing on the best available data about children and families to best understand their communities' needs. At the end of FY08 and the beginning of FY09, County Partnerships began an extensive analysis of this data, including data about the risk factors known to impact children's potential school success, such as low birth weight, teen mothers, and families living in poverty. A county-level risk data report is included in the subsequent pages of this report.

Your 2008 School Readiness Risk Profile will be inserted by OFS after this section. For your reference, a PDF of this risk profile was sent to you along with your Annual Report Template

Success Stories

When Matius began the First Steps program he did not talk much and he only communicated to me through pointing and crying. I would read to him, but he would not sit through an entire book. Since being enrolled in First Steps, Matius loves to read all the books he has received. He actually has certain parts of his favorite books memorized and makes the sounds of the animals and can sing “The Seals on the Bus”. Matius communicates what he wants so much better than when we began the program. He tells me when something hurts, when he wants juice to drink, and even when he wants to go outside. I am so proud of his development and I have learned how to stimulate my child’s desire to read. I will continue to work with him because I feel that his early desire to read will allow him to reach all possibilities as he continues to grow.

Parent: Leah Williams, Early Advantages Program

Olivia and I have not been involved in First Steps for very long. I have a friend whose son is in First Steps and that is why I decided to get involved. When Olivia was born, we were enrolled in the Dolly Parton book program. I read to her every night at bedtime. Olivia now loves to read books and have them read to her. She looks forward to the visits from Mrs. Althea because she knows she will be getting a new book or toy. After she receives her book or toy, she has a special place in her room where she keeps them. I feel like this program will help me prepare Olivia for school. I am looking forward to learning more about how my child learns and helping her grow.

Parent: April Heaston, Early Advantages Program

Leslie Williams, Director at Bethesda Christian School

“KCFS training provides an indispensable tool for childcare centers. Trainings are affordable, convenient, and directly address developmentally appropriate practice.”

Cathy Finch, Co-Director at Homestyle Childcare Center, Inc.

KCFS “The BEE Program- Books Enrich Everyone” is very beneficial as it encourages young children to read. It creates excitement in the family. You have parents and children reading together. We incorporate the books received from KCFS into our curriculum.”



Kershaw County Early Advantages Program (Parent-Child Home) Christmas Celebration



*Annual Meeting Award Ceremony for Child Care Quality Enhancement Initiative
(Kiddieland II, Montessori School of Camden, God First Family Daycare, Lil Angels Daycare)*



Kershaw County Early Advantages Program (Parent Child Home) End of Year Celebration



Kershaw County First Steps Executive Committee (Sammie Tucker, Jr- Board Chairman; John Clinton- Board Vice Chairman; Dr. Tracy West, Secretary; Amy Scholfield, Asst. Secretary; Lottie Jones, Treasurer; Katharine Bradley, Legislative Chair.



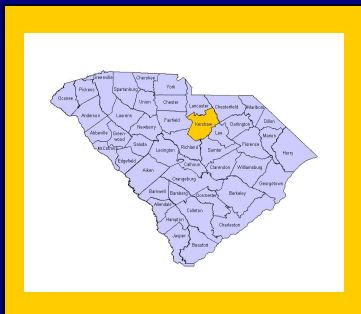
Kershaw County Child Care training participants: Bethesda Christian School and KiddleLand II Daycare.



Teaching Hands Daycare during technical assistance visit.

The SC General Assembly created in 1999 the South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness Initiative as a “comprehensive, results-oriented initiative for improving early childhood development by providing, through county partnerships, public and private funds and support for high quality early childhood development and education services for children by providing support for their families’ efforts toward enabling their children to reach school ready to learn”...here's what happened next:

First Steps Strategy Areas	Notable Moments
Family Strengthening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kershaw County First Steps was one of the first “First Steps” counties to implement an in-house Parent-Child Home Program.
Healthy Start	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
Quality Child Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 QEI centers’ entire lead teacher staff has completed the ECD101 class. • Kershaw County First Steps partnered with the Friends of the Kershaw County Library to implement a BEE (Books Enrich Everyone) Program. The grant was for a three year service period
Early Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
School Transition Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
Non-Standard Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kershaw County First Steps was one of the first “First Steps” counties to partner with South Carolina Child care Resource and Referral (Midlands Region) as a service contractor.



2008 School Readiness Risk Profile

Kershaw County

Total Children Under Six: 4,363

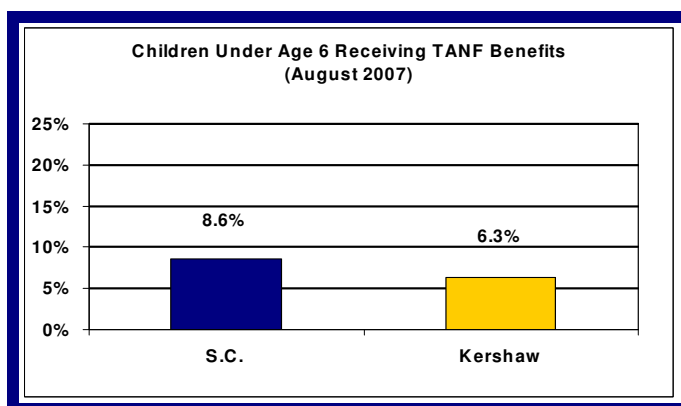
CHILD POVERTY (Children in Families Receiving TANF Benefits)

Statewide Average (2007): 8.4%

Kershaw County (2007): 6.3%

Fast Fact: Roughly 1 in 16 Kershaw County children has an annual family income equivalent to \$10,325 (or less) for a family of four. A recent statewide analysis suggests that 45% of these children will be retained or score at the “below basic” level (PACT) by third grade.

- Children in deep poverty often face a wide variety of school readiness obstacles, ranging from inadequate prenatal care and nutrition to low maternal education.
- 274 of Kershaw County’s 4,363 children under age 6 received federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits during 2007, indicating a family income at or below 50% of the federal poverty definition.



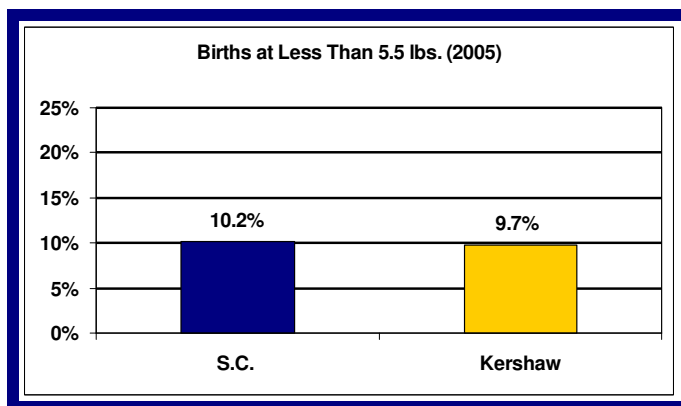
CHILDREN AT LOW BIRTH WEIGHT (Less Than 5.5 lbs.)

Statewide Average (2005): 10.2%

Kershaw County (2005): 9.7%

Fast Fact: Nearly 1 in 10 Kershaw County children is born at a weight less than 5.5 lbs. A recent statewide analysis suggests that at least one-third of these children (36%-52% depending on weight category) will be retained or score at the “below basic” level (PACT) by third grade.

- Babies born at low weights are often prone to developmental delays associated with early academic failure.
- Many have received inadequate prenatal care and suffer from significant health complications.
- 74 of the 763 children born in Kershaw County during 2005 weighed less than 5.5 lbs.



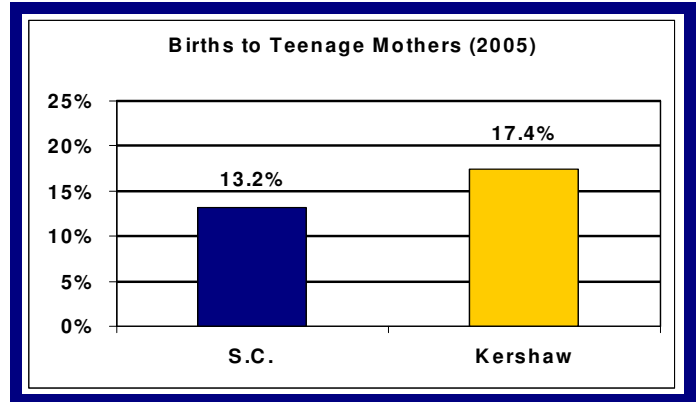
BIRTHS TO TEENAGE MOTHERS

Statewide Average (2005): 13.2%

Kershaw County (2005): 17.4%

Fast Fact: Nearly 1 in 6 Kershaw County births is to a mother under 20 years of age. A recent statewide analysis suggests that 43% of these children will be retained or score at the “below basic” level (PACT) by third grade.

- Teenage parents often lack the maturity and knowledge required to optimally fulfill important parental responsibilities, are less likely to advance their own educational attainment and often fail to advance beyond low-income status.
- 133 of the 763 children born in Kershaw County during 2005 had teenage mothers.



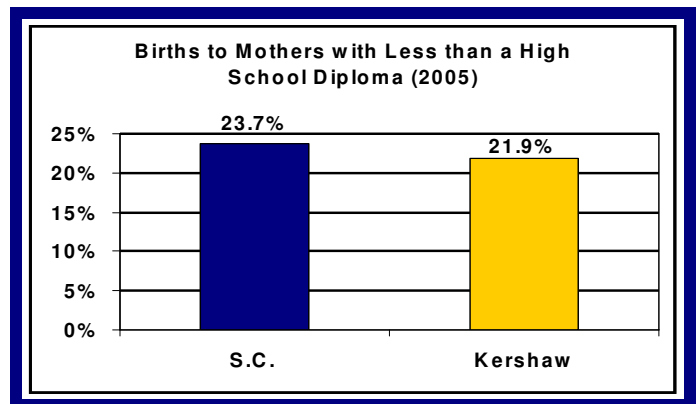
BIRTHS TO MOTHERS WITH LESS THAN A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA

Statewide Average (2005): 23.7%

Kershaw County (2005): 21.9%

Fast Fact: 1 in 5 children in Kershaw County is born to a mother possessing less than a high school diploma. A recent statewide analysis suggests that roughly half (48%) of these children will be retained or score at the “below basic” level (PACT) by third grade.

- Research suggests that a mother’s own educational attainment is closely linked to the subsequent academic performance of her children.
- 167 of the 763 children born in Kershaw County during 2005 had mothers with less than a high school diploma.



All data provided by the SC Budget and Control Board’s Office of Research and Statistics